(Mr. Van Dunem Mbinda, Angola)

As the Assembly knows, Angola is one of the front-line States that has most suffered the terrible consequences of the obnoxious apartheid regime, whose repressive machine was experienced in our country in its vain attempt to stop the irreversible process that has been developing in that part of that continent. We call to mind today the events at Cassinga and Kuito Cuanavale and of many other crimes that left 60,000 people disabled and an undetermined extent of damage to the social and economic infrastructures, at a cost of billions of dollars. The resistance of the Angolan people - which during the most difficult times was able to count on international solidarity and in particular on the people of Cuba - frustrated all the intentions of the Pretoria regime, which was trying to widen its influence in the region and to neutralize the struggles of the peoples of Namibia and South Africa.

As always, Angola will continue to lend its support until the Pretoria regime is completely eliminated and replaced by a democratic one in which all South Africans are equal. The violence must end. Hatred and resentment must be things of the past. Last September, the National Peace Accord brought solid hopes for peace and reconciliation. The regime will have to make a serious effort to adopt attitudes that do not compromise the entire process during the transitional period towards a new constitutional order. It will need to demonstrate good faith in all its positions so as not to jeopardize the economic and political future of South Africa. South Africa must move towards a new constitutional order.

Once again, Angola reaffirms its support of the South African people in its legitimate struggle to end apartheid and to establish a just society in which all are united as one people on the same non-racial and democratic

(Mr. Van Dunem Mbinda, Angola)

platform, and in which all - without distinction of race, colour, sex or religious belief - enjoy the same human rights and fundamental freedoms.

With respect to the future of southern Africa, a few days ago the President of the People's Republic of Angola, Jose Eduardo dos Santos, defended the idea of creating a broad forum of conciliation in which the interests of all peoples in the region would be reconciled. According to the Angolan President, this forum would safeguard coexistence, peace, regional stability and the peaceful transition of each State to democracy.

Angola will increase its level of participation in the Southern Africa Development Coordination Conference, of which it is a founding member, and in the Zone of Preferential Exchange. This participation will allow an ever-closer linkage between internal development programmes and projects for the economic integration of southern Africa.

I should like to recall that an agreement was signed about three years ago as a result of meetings held between Angola, Cuba and South Africa as parties and the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics as observers. That document is now part of the historical records of the international community. The agreement, accepted by all parties as a result of their joint efforts, was of vital importance for the peace and security of South Africa, guaranteeing as it did the independence of Namibia based on Security Council resolution 435 (1978).

Angola thus contributed to ending the whole cycle of violence, in which we were victims of constant aggression, and at the same time succeeded in ending the colonization of Namibia. We thus made our friendly contribution to a new era of peace, security and stability in south-western Africa. As we said then, the use of force, whether offensive or defensive, to solve

(Mr. Van Dunem Mbinda, Angola)

political problems must give way to constructive dialogue. All parties involved had the right to participate in that historical moment, which marked the beginning of a new era in southern Africa, our continent.

We believe that the sanctions against South Africa must be maintained despite the changes that have taken place. As the President of the African National Congress, Nelson Mandela, said yesterday, the lifting of sanctions should be phased in proportion to the progress of the internal political process, since sanctions have proved to be efficient in bringing about democratic reforms.

We take this opportunity to extend special recognition to Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, Secretary-General of our international Organization, for his personal commitment to resolving the problems of southern Africa. His name will forever be linked to the history of the peoples of our region because of his unwavering faith and determination, which contributed to bringing about the New York Agreements and to establishing new hope for lasting peace in the southern part of our continent. We extend him our most sincere wishes for his well-being and happiness.

To Mr. Boutros Boutros Ghali, a worthy son of Africa, we reiterate our most sincere satisfaction at seeing him take up this most difficult but worthy task.

Mr. BASALAMAH (Yemen) (interpretation from Arabic): The world is today witnessing positive developments as a natural consequence of the development of new international relations, especially after the end of the cold war and the resultant emergence of the new world order.

The momentous events that took place have created a political climate that has been conducive to the settlement of many chronic regional conflicts.

(Mr. Basalamah, Yemen)

Some of those conflicts have been resolved, with the result that rights have been restored after many years of arduous and bitter struggle. We are pleased that these developments have begun to take effect in southern Africa and have led to positive results, such as the independence of Namibia and the legitimate accession to power by the Namibian people through its legitimate representatives.

The delegation of the Republic of Yemen, which considers the independence of Namibia to be a great victory for those who stood by the Namibian people, and a victory for the whole world, hopes that the people of South Africa will regain its legitimate rights and attain its national independence, so that the South African majority may accede to power.

(Mr. Basalamah, Yemen)

In this respect, the international community can discern positive signs that indicate movement towards a peaceful settlement of the problem. These include the relaxation of certain racist laws and practices and their replacement by measures that have as their aim the participation of all the population of the country without distinction on the basis of colour, race or language, and with no restriction being imposed on the black majority.

The problem will remain, however, so long as the racial discrimination which is being practised so harshly against the people of South Africa continues to be the official policy of the white minority racist regime that daily enforces and practises that policy as it has done over the years with no respect for human rights and regardless of the fact that it flies in the face of the most basic norms and principles of international law.

There is no doubt that international solidarity has borne fruit. We can witness today its results in the form of direct negotiations between the concerned parties in the hope of reaching an agreement that may lead to constitutional amendments which would guarantee for people the right of being masters of their own fate in their own land.

Our delegation looks forward to the day when all the people of South Africa will enjoy their legitimate rights side by side, managing the affairs of their country in every political, economic and social sphere. We hope to see them taking their seat among us so that they can contribute with us to the achievement of economic prosperity and stability for the world at large. I do not think it needs stressing how the international community has declared year after year that racism is the most heinous crime against humanity and called for the complete eradication of apartheid.

(Mr. Basalamah, Yemen)

The international community has adopted many measures, foremost among which has been the military and economic embargo imposed on that regime with the aim of forcing it to respect the international will. In order for this objective to be realized, we believe that the international community is duty bound to persist in its stance of solidarity with and to continue to give assistance to the people of South Africa with the same enthusiasm that it has shown from the outset, so that the people of South Africa may achieve its objectives. Any compromise or bargaining with the racist regime or relaxing of the measures aimed at the complete elimination of apartheid would be an unwarranted retreat that may lead to negative results which could undermine the achievements of the past few years.

My delegation considers that the triumph of human rights in South Africa is a great gain for mankind as a whole, and a final end to the policy of apartheid in South Africa.

Needless to say, there is an organic link between the Israeli regime and the racist white minority regime in South Africa. There are many similarities between the two regimes which pursue a common policy of oppression, terrorism and repression. Israel is setting records in torture and killing with no respect for the resolutions calling upon it to respect international law and implement the resolutions adopted to that end. It rides roughshod over all efforts aimed at restoring the legitimate right of the Palestinian people to self-determination on its national soil and calling for full withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories in the Syrian Golan and southern Lebanon.

Yemen supports all efforts aimed at the achievement of a just and comprehensive peace in South Africa as has been the case with regard to many other peoples that have won their freedom and independence.

Mr. VAZQUEZ (Argentina) (interpretation from Spanish): The United Nations General Assembly must again undertake consideration of an item which the overwhelming majority of its members would like to see completed on its agenda. As on previous occasions, the Republic of Argentina wishes to reiterate its most vigorous condemnation of the policy of apartheid and its solidarity with apartheid's victims. This position is in logical accordance with the basic principles on which the Republic of Argentina was founded.

Having made this statement of principle, we must recognize that our remarks in this debate are clearly influenced by the progress made in the Republic of South Africa in the present moves to bring apartheid to an end. We understand that various significant steps have been taken in this respect. We note with satisfaction measures taken in June to remove the basic laws institutionalizing apartheid from the statute books. Similarly we consider promising the National Peace Accord reached in Johannesburg between the South African authorities, the African National Congress, the Inkatha Freedom Party and other organizations. The Accord, which lays down codes of conduct for the security forces, political parties and organizations and establishes a national peace committee to monitor application of the Accord, is a good example of reconciliation and can be considered as a precursor to negotiations on a new constitution.

We also consider encouraging the results of the Conference of the United Patriotic Front in October where the ANC and the Pan-African Congress (PAC) and political trade unions and other bodies reached agreement on a common approach to the constitutional process. Also worth noting was the Memorandum of Understanding signed in September between the Government of South Africa and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) for the voluntary repatriation and reintegration of South African returnees, leading

(Mr. Vazquez, Argentina)

to the opening of an office of a special representative in South Africa and guaranteeing free and unimpeded access of the Organization to South African returnees.

This recognition of the process of political transformation, to permit the establishment in South Africa of a democratic political system based on universal suffrage and equality before the law in a sovere'gn and independent system, led the Government of Argentina to conclude, on 8 August, an agreement on the re-establishment of diplomatic relations with the Republic of South Africa.

My Government hopes that the reopening of diplomatic ties will enable us to monitor more closely and encourage through positive collaboration the present process, because it is aware that there still exist important outstanding problems that need to be solved in order to consolidate the reform process in South Africa. In that respect I wish to point out the encouragement and incentives it is giving to the Government and the people of South Africa to complete the transformation as soon as possible, and to do so in a framework of national reconciliation and harmonious coexistence with neighbouring countries.

In this connection we hope that the effective implementation of the repeal of the apartheid laws will be reflected in elimination of inequalities among the population in important subjects such as land ownership, education and health.

(Mr. Vazquez, Argentina)

It is no less indispensable that all political prisoners be freed, and we consider that the full implementation of agreements in that connection and the entry into force of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Government and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees will unquestionably contribute to consolidating a climate conducive to negotiations.

My country trusts that the full implementation of the national peace agreement will end the violence that continues in the country and eliminate the obstacles blocking free political activity.

Moreover, we encourage the speedy commencement of broad, substantive negotiations on a new constitution and on transitional agreements laying the basis for a democratic South Africa. In that connection, we commend the parties involved in last weekend's preparatory meeting at which it was agreed to convene a convention on a democratic South Africa. We hope for the success of that convention, which will initiate formal negotiations on post-apartheid South Africa. We hope it will narrow the differences between the constitutional models that have been proposed by various groups and the differences on the machinery for drafting a new constitution and on transitional arrangements and modalities.

I conclude by expressing the hope that this will be one of the last General Assembly sessions with this item on its agenda, and that the Assembly will continue to ensure the implementation of the principles of the Charter with the cooperation of a democratic, non-racist South Africa. To that end, we must reiterate a simple principle that forms the basis and underpinning of any democratic system: one man, one vote.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this item.

I should like to inform members that draft resolutions submitted under this agenda item will be considered at a later date to be announced in the Journal.

The meeting rose at 6.55 p.m.